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ABSTRACT

Examined in this study are the characteristics of three elementary magnet schools which have successfully attracted non-minority students to locations in minority neighborhoods. Although some of the characteristics discussed are different for each of the schools described, the characteristics cited as being common to all three are: (1) outstanding leadership, particularly on the part of the building principal; (2) an outstanding instructional program which in one way or another provides an unusual amount of individual attention to help students master basic learning skills in a high interest environment; (3) an attractive building; (4) active recruiting involving a variety of ingenious approaches to contacting and impressing potential clients; and (5) a low ratio of students to adults. It is also pointed out that, in addition to these common characteristics, each of the three schools had distinctive approaches or programs that contributed to their success in enrolling non-minority students. The respective approaches and/or programs of each school are summarized. In addition, references are made to the influences the size of the school or student body had on each school's success in attracting non-minority students. (Author/EB)

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ATTRACTING NONMINORITY STUDENTS TO MAGNET SCHOOLS IN MINORITY NEIGHBORHOODS

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association
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Attracting Nonminority Students to Magnet Schools in Minority Neighborhoods

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The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of magnet schools which have successfully attracted nonminority students to locations in minority neighborhoods. The study was carried out through case studies of magnet schools which have or have had predominantly minority enrollment but also attracted a substantial proportion of nonminority students into minority, inner-city neighborhoods.

The first step in the study was to identify schools which met the description given above. Individuals in various parts of the country were contacted to inquire whether they knew of schools which met this description. Nominations which did were carefully reviewed, and whenever possible, a site visit was made to determine what had been done to attract nonminority students. Additional information was obtained about those which enrollment data indicated had attracted a substantial percentage of students into predominantly minority neighborhoods. In obtaining information about these schools, we particularly asked about program offerings and other characteristics that might have been responsible for success in meeting this goal.

This is an on-going study in which we are still trying to identify schools which have attracted a substantial number or percetage of nonminority students into minority neighborhoods and to derive generalizations about the reasons these schools have been successful in this regard. We do not expect to produce a comprehensive set of certified rules for

achieving this goal as part of the study but we do believe that analysis of the situation in successful examples can be useful to educators in other locations. The following pages will briefly describe key developments in three of the schools we have visited or obtained information about.* The paper will conclude with a discussion of general considerations that may be helpful in planning aimed at attracting nonminority students to predominantly minority schools.

As noted above, the focus of the study is on magnet schools which have attracted a substantial number or percentage of nonminority students into schools in predominantly minority neighborhoods. However, we have side-stepped the issue of defining what is a "substantial" number or proportion of nonminority students. A definition will be implicit in this paper in the sense that numbers and proportions of nonminority students at the schools we will describe in effect point to floor criteria in selecting schools for inclusion. On the other hand, we were not faced with the task of rejecting a school slightly below some figure specified in advance, because we did not collect data on a large number of schools to begin with and we felt that few definitional questions would be raised concerning those we did examine.

GOLDA MEIR (FOURTH STREET) SCHOOL IN MILWAUKEE

The Golda Meir School in Milwaukee has a long history as the Fourth Street Elementary School dating back to 1865. Recently re-named for one of its most illustrious graduates, Golda Meir is a city-wide Specialty (i.e., magnet) school for the gifted and talented.

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*We wish to thank Connie Campbell for helping us prepare the section on Ryle Elementary School.

Located adjacent to downtown, the school enrolls 225 students in grades three, four and five. Many decades ago the neighborhood included relatively affluent families, but over the years the neighborhood declined and then became mostly industrial. Corporate redevelopment has occurred in much of the attendance area, and the school is located in the midst of a number of factories and businesses including the Schlitz Brewery across the street. By 1975 there were only about 80 students remaining in the school, nearly all of them low-income black students.

Many of Milwaukee's Specialty schools and programs were established in the fall of 1976, when the Fourth Street School was closed and re-opened as the city-wide magnet for gifted and talented students in grades three, four, and five. Criteria for admission were not limited to demonstrated academic ability and achievement but also included giftedness along such HEW-endorsed dimensions as study skills, self-confidence, psychomotor skills, creative talents, and leadership qualities. Students who rate high in these latter qualities can be admitted even if their scores on academic or ability tests are not unusually high. Selection procedures have been modified over the past few years in accordance with the following pattern:

- for 1976-1977, nearly 700 teachers nominated approximately 2200 students. The 225 students admitted were selected more-or-less randomly from among about 450 whose parents then sent in application forms, using racial-and sex-balance targets for each grade level.

- for 1977-1978, any parent or teacher of a student finishing the third grade could nominate a child for the 75 places for new fourth graders. Next, an effort was made to contact the other party (parent or teacher) to verify a student's

status as gifted or talented and to solicit an application form. Approximately 300 students applied.

- for 1978-1979, basically the same procedure was followed with even more of an effort being made to contact both third-grade teachers and parents to solicit and analyze nominations.

As a result of these procedures, forty percent of the students at Golda Meir are black, nearly three percent are Hispanic, and the remainder are nonminority. Students come from approximately 90 "home school" attendance areas, and fifteen of the 225 students come from 4 suburban school districts. Approximately one-third of the students are low-income pupils eligible for subsidized lunch, but others are from wealthy families in outlying parts of the Milwaukee school district.*

Developed through the outstanding leadership of Principal Albin Kaczmarek, Golda Meir School is now a flourishing middle-grades center that attracts large numbers of non-minority students into a formerly black school located in a part of Milwaukee which has a strong negative image. Kaczmarek and several central office administrators, including Curriculum Supervisor Jack Beschta and Deputy Superintendent David A. Bennett, have worked hard to make the school magnetic for students and parents. Among Golda Meir's magnetic characteristics are the following:

- an outstanding program of curriculum and instruction including individualized teaching, challenging learning materials and assignments, and emphasis on experiential learning. In addition, Meir has instructors in art, music, and physical education who are present every other day, full-time paraprofessional specialists in mathematics, science, reading, and art, and a full-time counselor who specializes

*Enrollment of these suburban students has been made possible by Wisconsin laws that provide financial incentives for city-suburban transfers to reduce segregation.

in work with gifted children. Special learning opportunities offered at the school as of March, 1979 through ingenious scheduling of staff and community resources include Model Building, Photography Club, Drill Team, Good Grooming, Piano, Disco, and Chorus. School staff draw extensively on nearby resources such as The Milwaukee Repertory Company and the Milwaukee Journal in teaching subjects such as drama and journalism.

- an attractive building which has been thoroughly remodelled to provide spacious rooms, a cheerful and comfortable atmosphere for learning, and resource centers for woodworking, home economics, music, and other subjects.* Remodelling has been carried out so as to modernize the building while restoring and integrating high-quality artisanship (e.g., stained glass windows in the third-floor gymnasium) which characterized Milwaukee schools at the turn of the century, but is seldom still available for public buildings.

- an outstanding staff with special talent and interest in working with gifted and talented children. In this regard it is worth noting that the Court order under which the Fourth Street School was re-organized in 1976 as part of Milwaukee's city-wide desegregation plan allowed the administration to replace six of the nine teachers previously assigned there, and that two of the remaining three teachers left the school shortly after reorganization. Thus, the administration was able to select eight of the nine regular classroom teachers in accordance with the innovative and specialized nature of the new instructional program.

Recruiting obviously is a key factor in attracting students to any magnet school, and this is especially true for a school located in the inner-city downtown core. In addition

*A good example of creative remodelling at Meir is provided by the old-style coatrooms outside each classroom, which have been modified to serve as small-group and individual learning areas.

to conducting a fundamentally attractive and exciting educational program and distributing a variety of promotional materials, administrators responsible for Golda Meir have taken a number of steps to ensure the success of student recruitment efforts. These include:

- solicitation of student nominations from second, third, and fourth grade teachers throughout the school district.

- encouraging staff in local schools to feel that they have done something positive for a child whom they nominate to attend Meir.

- sending letters of appreciation to teachers who nominate students.

- adopting a selection process that draws from the entire district and does not remove a substantial number of students from any one school.

- arranging schedules so that staff members are always available to show the school to parents of prospective students.

- during the first year, giving preference to siblings of students already enrolled.

We will discuss recruitment considerations further in the concluding section of this paper, but at this point we want to acknowledge the assertion that it may not be particularly difficult to attract nonminority students to an inner-city magnet school for the gifted from which the previous student body has been removed. We feel there is some truth to this assertion, but we do not entirely agree with it and we believe that much of value can be learned from experience at a school like Golda Meir. At this point, however, we will describe another former minority school which has attracted a substantial number of nonminority students - the Ryle Elementary Magnet School in Stamford, Connecticut.

JOHN J. RYLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

Ryle is a K-4 school located in an affluent suburb of New York. However, Stamford has several low-income neighborhoods, one of which is served by Ryle. By 1971 ninety percent of the student body was minority, and the Board of Education considered closing Ryle and two other schools which were attended largely by low-income minority students. Instead, the board closed only two of the schools and left Ryle open as a magnet school. In 1972, there were 177 students, 23 from outside the Ryle attendance area. For the 1977-1978 school year, enrollment had climbed to 352, with a waiting list of 40, and 164 of the students were transported in voluntarily from other attendance areas. Forty-seven percent of the students were black, two percent were Asian, nine percent were Hispanic, and 41 percent were "other white."

The major characteristics which appear to be responsible for much of Ryle's success in attracting nonminority students include the following:

- a child-centered instructional program following the learning system developed at the Bank Street College of Education in New York City. The Bank Street system, which includes methodology, curriculum, and textbooks, makes it possible for every teacher at a given grade to teach the same lesson.* In addition, emphasis is placed on having students work on high-interest projects that tie together the curriculum in differing subject areas, and staff keep complete records of each child's physical, emotional, and intellectual development to plan assignments and projects that will be most beneficial to the individual child. To provide continuous guidance for each child and otherwise help carry out this type of program, teacher aides and adult

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*The Ryle approach and the Bank Street program are described in some detail in Robert L. Perry, "Revolution at Ryle", American Education, v. 14, no. 5 (June 1978), 25-32.

volunteers are drawn on heavily and play an indispensable part in carrying it out.

- as a result of the emphasis on providing teacher aides and drawing on adult volunteers, there is a very low ratio of students to adults, and a class-size limit of 22.

These characteristics are the visible attractions for many of the nonminority parents who choose to send their children to Ryle. However, it is unlikely that simply initiating an individualized learning-by-doing instructional approach combined with a low ratio of students to adults is sufficient to attract significant numbers of nonminority students to a predominantly minority school in a low-income neighborhood. Something must be done to make the program an obviously effective and successful one that will be persuasive to parents, and recruiting will not be successful unless parents are convinced the program is offering superior educational opportunities. Among the actions and characteristics that have helped in recruiting students to Ryle are the following:

- Staff development is given continuous attention at Ryle and other schools using the Bank Street program. Ryle has a full-time staff developer who visits each classroom daily, works individually and in small groups with the entire staff, conducts or organizes weekly workshops and conferences, and generally serves as a link between the administration and the teaching staff in working to ensure the successful implementation of the program.

- Parents have been heavily involved in a variety of ways that have contributed to success of the magnet program. Parents serve as aides in the classroom, as tour guides for the school's constant stream of visitors, as assistants on the frequent field

trips conducted as part of the instructional program, and as constant suppliers of materials (e.g., coffee cans, egg cartons) used in the school's project-oriented curriculum. Ryle also has a room for parents set aside to enhance their feelings of comfort in the school, and a volunteer babysitter is on hand to watch their children. All these activities help create friends and potential clients and recruiters for the magnet program.

- Principal Frank Jerabek has provided outstanding leadership in all aspects of the organization and operation of the school. Freed of extra duties (e.g., central office teacher interviewing teams) by the central administration, Jerabek has been able and willing to concentrate enormous energy on recruiting of students, initiation and development of the instructional program, and maintenance of good community relations. He has been particularly ingenious in originating a large variety of after-school and evening activities at Ryle, in delegating non-essential duties to parent volunteers, and in finding ways to involve parents - particularly fathers - in school improvement efforts.

- At the insistence of Bank Street, every teacher assigned to Ryle must volunteer to teach there.

- During the first year of operation, Bank Street consultants were present at least four days a week to assist in program development.

- Ryle has a pre-school program open to middle-income, as well as low-income,students. Many parents from outside the attendance area take advantage of this opportunity, and children once enrolled in the pre-school tend to stay in later years.

- The building has been remodelled and made as attractive as possible with original color schemes and visually-exciting colors not usually used in public schools. Parents were enlisted to help in remodelling and equipping the facility.

Some readers may object that a school in a low-income neighborhood in an affluent New York suburb is not the same as a poverty-area minority school in a big city, that it is much more difficult to attract nonminority parents to the latter type of school than the former. We are sure there is something to be said for this objection, but we also feel that the qualities and characteristics that have made a school like Ryle attractive can help attract parents to an inner city school in a big city. Support for this conclusion can be found in the following description of the Webster Magnet School located in the inner core part of St. Paul, Minnesota.

WEBSTER MAGNET SCHOOL IN ST. PAUL

The Webster Elementary Magnet School in St. Paul, Minnesota is a K-6 school located in a large redeveloping neighborhood near the downtown area. Slum clearance and housing rehabilitation have been taking place on some blocks for a number of years, and some new housing has been built using various forms of government subsidy and support. On the whole, the neighborhood remains one of the most dilapidated in the city, in line with its former reputation as the roughest and most socially disorganized section of St. Paul, but the worst housing has been torn down, low-income families in the neighborhood have a safer and more stable environment than before, and middle-class residents are now restoring many of its fine, old homes.

Coincidental with this process of urban redevelopment, Webster has become a very different school than it was. In 1975, St. Paul school officials designated Webster to be

a desegregated magnet school as part of the overall plan for the desegregation of the district. By that time, enrollment had declined to 362, 74 percent minority. The great majority of these pupils were economically disadvantaged, the neighborhood was considered so unsafe that students were allowed to ride a bus only a few blocks to school, and there was a question whether Webster could retain any middle-class or nonminority students. There is no doubt that Webster was a typical inner city school which would have trouble retaining children of local residents, much less attracting students from other neighborhoods.

Planning for the magnetization of Webster was aided to a considerable degree by citizens representing a cluster of eleven elementary schools formed as part of the school district's efforts to involve the community in planning for desegregation. Suggestions for the magnet program and desegregation at Webster and other league schools were made at a series of public meetings and neighborhood discussions, with an initial year of planning allowed to develop and implement these ideas.*

Webster became a magnet school during the 1975-1976 school year and increased its enrollment to 622, 46 percent minority. After a $600,000 addition to the building was opened, enrollment increased to 975 in 1978-1979, with minority students constituting 30 percent of the student body and 575 pupils voluntarily bused in. (The longest bus ride for any child is 25 minutes.) Thus, Webster clearly has succeeded in attracting a large number of nonminority students into the inner city in St. Paul during an era when enrollment in the public school system has been steadily declining. In the process of doing this, additional space also has been made available for more minority students who transfer in to take advantage of the special opportunities available at Webster.

According to Principal Warren Panushka and Erma E. McGuire, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, the main attraction for parents sending their children to Webster

*Gordon J. Cherveny and Dale A. Srigley, "Parental Reasons for Selecting the Webster Magnet School Program, A Descriptive Study." Education Specialist Thesis, College of St. Thomas, July 1972, p. 22.

is the school's outstanding instructional program. Major program features include the following:

- A split-day schedule called the Dual Progress Plan, according to which approximately one-half of a student's day is devoted entirely to basic skills instruction and the other half is spent in application of skills. Basic skills instruction in reading and mathematics is provided by assigning students into "accelerated," "mainstream", and "alternative " (significantly below normal achievement range) groups, with great efforts made to avoid racial segregation within this grouping. The applied skills part of the program allows for a great variety of enrichment activities building on the particular learning interests and requests of students. Thus, the overall program can be equally attractive both to parents who want something they call "the basics" stressed for their children and for those whose greatest stress is on something they refer to as "openness" or "humaneness." Subjects which have been taught in mini-courses as part of the applied skills program include: Arts and Crafts; Heritage - Many Lands and People; Ceramics; Photography; Creative Writing; Classical Literature; Children's Theater; Performing Arts; Creative Drama; Dance; Vocal Music; Instrumental Music; Spanish; French; Computer Logic; Typing; Business; and Environmental Science.

- The remodelled old building and the newly-constructed addition provide an outstanding facility for learning, including several carefully-planned laboratories which not only are excellent resources to enrich learning, but also serve as a physical demonstration to show parents that much more is available at Webster than at the typical elementary school in St. Paul or other school districts. For example,

the Media Center is equipped so that students can learn cartooning, motion picture production, still photography, television taping, puppetry, and dramatics. Similarly, students in the Power Lab tear down and reassemble small gasoline engines, construct radios and operate a ham station, and participate in aerospace studies including fundamentals of flight, simulated flying, and field work at a military airbase. Students in the Biology Lab study and care for animals loaned from the State Zoological Gardens and go on camping trips, while students in the Business Center are introduced to business machines and office procedures and also operate the school store.

- Class size at Webster is smaller than at most other elementary schools in St. Paul.

- Resources for meeting students' special learning needs include a Project Read program, tutoring services, a Talking Typewriter project, a physical therapist, after-school study facilities, and early childhood day-care arrangements.

It is obvious that a program of this variety and distinctiveness depends on outstanding leadership from the principal and other St. Paul administrators and an outstanding staff of vigorous teachers. These resources are clearly in evidence at Webster and surely must be an important factor that favorably impresses parents willing to consider sending their children to the school.

In addition to program, building, and staff characteristics that help account for Webster's success in attracting nonminority students, we felt that several other factors probably had a significant influence in recruitment. These factors were as follows:

- The magnet plan for Webster and for St. Paul as a whole was prepared with full community participation. In the case of Webster, this meant that the plan was prepared by citizens representing Webster and ten other schools (the Gemini Cluster) and that the Gemini Community Advisory Board was very active in publicizing and implementing the plan and recruiting students for the magnet program.

- A systematic, thorough, relatively low-key effort has been made to ensure nonminority parents and middle-status parents that Webster has effective security arrangements. For example, the glossy brochure describing Webster's program includes the following paragraphs under the block heading "PUPIL SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE":

> PUPIL SAFETY, MANAGEMENT and DISCIPLINE is an issue of high priority. School policy mandates adult supervision of pupil groups at all times, excluding lavatory use and emergencies.
>
> THREE HOME-SCHOOL LIAISON WORKERS will function in and about the school seeking to identify, prevent and remedy pupil problems.
>
> The FULL-TIME SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER works closely with teachers and pupils in the classroom seeking to identify potential and on-going problems for the purpose of preventing and alleviating them. The SOCIAL WORKER communicates directly with parents and other agencies for the benefit and improvement of pupil academic achievement.
>
> An active PUPIL PERSONNEL PROBLEMS COMMITTEE meets weekly to monitor pupil management, pupil problems and to devise plans for improvement of pupil behavior, individually and in groups. The principal, social worker, home-school liaison workers, nurse and several teachers comprise this committee.

> Concern has been given to younger pupils becoming "perceptually lost" in the complex of buildings that will house the Magnet Program. For this reason primary pupils will be located in the Webster building and intermediate pupils will be located in the Marshall building for academic instruction.

- Recruiting and publicity materials have included a variety of formats such as professionally-produced brochures and bulletins. We cannot resist quoting from one of these brochures (The Webster Peanut Butter and Jelly Book) which has outstanding drawings of great appeal to children, simple text for the student recipient, and a brief program description for the parent. The text for the child followed by the final words directed to the parent are as follows:

> Hi. This is a book about the basics - like peanut butter and jelly - and Webster.
>
> Webster has real small classes. That way you get more help.
>
> And you can even design your own education.
>
> The afternoons are gangbusters. You make movies and stuff.
>
> A bus picks you up close to home. And brings you back, too.
>
> C'mon back to basics. And basics, plus. Come to Webster. It's terrific.

> We'd like to meet you and tell you why we think the Webster Magnet School can meet the particular academic needs of your child and at the same time provide highly interesting special programs for utilizing his skills and for motivating him to develop new skills and interests. Would you please fill out the enclosed card and return it to us today?
>
> By the way, it's all free.*

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*Webster Magnet School. An Alternative School. St. Paul: St. Paul Public Schools, Publication No. 7475047, April 1975, p. 29.

- Many of the predominantly middle-status schools not far from Webster have relatively traditional programs which differ little from the typical school of forty or fifty years ago. This appears to have been an important factor in generating parental dissatisfaction with some of the neighborhood schools in St. Paul and in encouraging parents to transfer their children to Webster.

Our perception of the reasons for Webster's success as defined and described above are in agreement with data collected by Cherveny and Srigley from parents of students who transferred to Webster from other attendance areas during the 1975-1976 school year. Cherveny and Srigley sent a questionnaire to 130 parents identified as being in this category and received answers from 113. Part of the questionnaire asked respondents to "Please indicate to what degree the following factors influenced your decision to enroll your child (children) in the Webster Magnet Program." Response categories were "Strong Influence," "Some Influence," and "No Influence." Respondents could mark 14 statements and also specify "other" factors that influenced their decision. Factors cited as a strong influence by at least ten percent of the respondents were as follows:

Factor *	Percent
1. The education program offered.	94
2. Class sizes smaller than the district average.	66
3. My child (children) has (have) special needs that can be provided by the Webster Magnet Program.	39
4. Tour of the Webster School buildings.	39

*Cherveny and Srigley, op.cit., p. 49. Eleven of the "other" responses volunteered by respondents involved perceptions that the faculty were unusually capable or concerned with each child's welfare.

Factor * (continued)	Percent
5. Information from a friend or neighbor (word of mouth) about the Webster Magnet Program.	32
6. My child (children) wanted to attend the Webster Magnet Program.	29
7. Dissatisfaction with the school in my attendance area.	27
8. A feeling of social responsibility to help with school desegregation.	20
9. Information presented at my neighborhood school P.T.S.A. meeting.	18
10. Information from the Gemini Community Advisory Board meetings.	12

CONCLUSION

We have described three elementary magnet schools which have succeeded in attracting significant numbers of nonminority students into previously-minority schools located in predominantly minority, low-income neighborhoods. We will not repeat all the characteristics which we believe helped achieve this goal at each of the three sites, but we do want to draw special attention to several key considerations that either are common to all three schools or that are worth special attention in analyzing the reasons for their success. Characteristics shared by the three schools are the following:

- outstanding leadership, particularly on the part of the building principal.

- an outstanding instructional program which in one way or another provides an unusual amount of individual attention to help students master basic learning skills and work to master independent learning skills in a high interest environment.

- an attractive building even if an old and remodelled one.

- active recruiting involving a variety of ingenious approaches to contacting and impressing potential clients (e.g., letters of appreciation to regular-school

teachers who nominate students to attend Golda Meir; providing a babysitter for visitors to Ryle; professionally-designed brochures at Webster).

- low ratio of students to adults.

None of these interrelated characteristics are the least bit surprising. Like any other type of school, a magnet school is not likely to be very successful unless it has an outstanding principal. Due to the nature of the task, it probably will not succeed in attracting students into a low-status neighborhood unless its program, facility, and resources are clearly outstanding and have basic appeal to middle-status parents who are somewhat dissatisfied with neighborhood school arrangements. Obviously, it must carry out an effective recruiting campaign if it is to attract new clients into an inner city neighborhood.

In addition to these common characteristics, each of the three schools had distinctive approaches or programs that contributed to their success in enrolling nonminority students. For example, Golda Meir schedules students in such a way as to allow continuing participation in special studies such as photography and music, Webster was planned partly by a community group which then had an interest in working to meet its goals for nonminority enrollment, and Ryle has a pre-school program which attracts nonminority students who subsequently stay in the primary grades. Recruiting pre-school students who subsequently stay in the magnet school also can be important in attracting siblings, which appears to be a very important factor in accumulating a critical mass of nonminority students at some big-city magnet schools.

One consideration which we did not discuss at length in the text above involves the size of the school or student body. It appears that one of the reasons for Webster's success may have been the building of a large addition to the old building, thereby making it possible to accept a large number of middle-status nonminority and minority students transferring in from other schools. It is possible that parents of potential transfer students

were explicitly or implicitly expectant that middle-status students thus would predominate in the new school. Of course, this strategy still depends on a perception among potential clients that enough of a "critical mass" of middle-status students will request transfer to change the school's atmosphere and reputation as an inner-city school. We do not know how one purposefully generates this critical mass perception, which undoubtedly depends on conditions in each city and neighborhood.

Another big-city magnet school that has attracted nonminority students to an inner city neighborhood also may illustrate how size can help in achieving this goal. The Academic Challenge Elementary School in Buffalo previously was an all-black school with declining enrollment. Located in the inner city, the school was converted into a magnet school as part of Buffalo's desegregation plan. For the 1978-1979 academic year, it enrolled 444 black students and 404 white students in a building with a capacity of 1750. Extra space in the building allowed the district to limit class size to twenty and to establish a Diagnostic-Prescriptive Center and other attractive programs. The large size of the building also may have been a consideration in convincing potential nonminority parents that there was plenty of room for enough new students to change the atmosphere and nature of this previously inner city school.

Conversely, we also know of situations in which small size played a part in attracting nonminority students to a predominantly minority school. One of these examples was in Chicago, where the Pershing Elementary School for years had a significant nonminority enrollment but a large majority of black students. Pershing was not a magnet school in the contemporary sense - it drew students entirely from middle-class apartment buildings adjoining slum areas on the south side. However, it also is true that many of the parents

who sent their children to Pershing would not have moved into the apartments had their children been forced to attend a nearby poverty school. Instead, these middle-status parents - both minority und nonminority - fought long, hard, and successfully to keep Pershing a small school with only eight classrooms - too small to accept poverty students who were overflowing the crowded classrooms at other nearby schools. In this type of situation small size can be a major consideration in making it possible to attract middle-status parents to a minority school near the inner city.

We have not remarked above on the issue of whether a mandatory "back-up" desegregation plan is required to encourage nonminority parents to send their children to magnet schools in predominantly minority neighborhoods. In all three of the cases we described, magnet schools were established as part of a larger desegregation effort which eventually might have required substantial student reassignment and transportation had not the magnets met their enrollment goals. It thus appears that magnetization may be more successful in attracting nonminority students to a minority school when there is the threat of a court order or an executive branch requirement for student reassignment than when the citizens of a community feel no pressure to make a magnet plan succeed. We suspect, on the other hand, that some magnet schools in low-income minority neighborhoods may be successful in attracting a significant number of nonminority students even in the absence of mandatory back-up pressures, provided that such schools have outstanding leadership and programs, and other attractive characteristics like those we have described in this paper. We hope that the paper will prove useful to educators contemplating the establishment of inner city magnet schools in other locations, regardless of whether or not they are under a judicial or executive gun to bring about more desegregation in local schools.